

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KABUL 01510 101151Z

43

ACTION NEA-06

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MC-01 /052 W

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R 101045Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1693

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 1510

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AF, PK, US, FPOR

SUBJ: AFGHAN-PAK RELATIONS; U.S. ARMS POLICY

1. EVENING MARCH 9 I HAD MY FIRST MEETING SINCE MY RETURN FROM LEAVE WITH DEPFONMIN ABDULLAH. WE HAD A TOUR D' HORIZON OF AFGHAN-PAK RELATIONS WITH LITTLE NEW EMERGING. THE MEETING ALSO PROVIDED AN OCCASION TO TOUCH ON OUR NEW SOUTH ASIAN ARMS POLICY.

2. ABDULLAH SAID THAT THE PRINCIPAL SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION DURING PRESIDENT DAOUD'S VISIT TO INDIA WOULD BE THE SITUATION IN THE REGION. HE SAID THAT THERE ARE INCREASING SIGNS THAT THE SITUATION INSIDE PAKISTAN IS DETERIORATING. HE MENTIONED SPECIFICALLY RECENT DISTURBANCES IN THE SIND, ADDING THAT "BHUTTO CANNOT BLAME THOSE ON AFGHANISTAN". HE ALSO SAID THAT MORE REFUGEES HAD CROSSED INTO AFGHANISTAN FROM PAKISTANI BALUCHISTAN AND THE GOA IS MAKING AN APPEAL TO THE UN FOR ASSISTANCE ASKED RHETORICALLY, CLEARLY REFERRING TO U.S. ARMS POLICY , " IN THIS SITUATION WHO CAN GUARANTEE THE
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PAGE 02 KABUL 01510 101151Z

INTEGRITY OF PAKISTAN?"

3. I TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO TELL ABDULLAH THAT WE HOPE, AND ARE EXPRESSING THIS HOPE ALSO IN ISLAMABAD, THAT CONDITIONS WILL SOON PERMIT A RESUMPTION OF EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH A DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS. I SAID WE WERE ALSO HOPEFUL THAT THE LEVEL AND TONE OF PROPAGANDA CAN BE REDUCED. REGARDING THE CHANGE IN OUR ARMS POLICY, I REITERATED THAT THE TIMING OF THE CHANGE WAS NOT RELATED TO THE RECENT INTERNAL EVENTS IN PAKISTAN. I ALSO SAID THAT I HOPED THE GOA WOULD COME TO UNDERSTAND AND ACCEPT THE RATIONALE BEHIND THE NEW POLICY AND WOULD NO LONGER FIND IT NECESSARY, EITHER AT HOME OR IN CONNECTION WITH PRESIDENT DAOUD'S TRIP TO INDIA, TO USE US AS A WHIPPING BOY.

4. REGARDING OUR ARMS POLICY, ABDULLAH SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THE INFORMED LEADERS OF THE GOA UNDERSTOOD THAT THE TIMING OF THE CHANGE AND OF EVENTS INSIDE PAKISTAN WAS NOT DELIBERATE THE GENERAL PUBLIC IN AFGHANISTAN WAS NOT SO EASILY CONVINCED THAT THAT WAS THE CASE, AND AFGHAN STATEMENTS HAD TO REFLECT PUBLIC OPINION. THE ONLY HOPEFUL NOTE HE STRUCK ON AFGHAN-PAK RELATIONS WAS TO SAY THAT HE CONTINUES TO BE GREATLY IMPRESSED BY THE SINCERITY AND COMPETENCE OF THE NEW PAKISTAN AMBASSADOR IN KABUL.

5. COMMENT: MY REMARKS TO ABDULLAH CONCERNING AFGHAN STATEMENTS ON OUR NEW ARMS POLICY WERE PROMPTED IN PART BY REPORTS WE HAVE HEARD THAT DAOUD HAS GIVEN AN INTERVIEW TO THE INDIAN NEWSPAPER BLITZ AND MAY ALSO MAKE A STRONG PUBLIC STATEMENT IN NEW DELHI DENOUNCING OUR NEW POLICY.
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